

MAKE BABIES IMMUNE

Prof. Emil von Behring's discovery of tuberculin, the serum which he declares will cure consumption, has almost completed his experiments, as to the best methods of using the serum for the relief of suffering humanity. His theories are diametrically opposed to those of Prof. Koch, of Berlin, whose pupil he formerly was.

Prof. von Behring believes that the germs of tuberculosis are taken into the system in infancy through the porous mucous membrane of the intestine; that consumption is essentially the same in cattle as in mankind, and that the disease appears in individuals who have carried the germs in their systems for years and is developed as a result of some unusual strain or exposure. He says that consumptives should be regarded as consumptives from the middle ages.

Prof. von Behring has become the medical celebrity of the hour. Every physician throughout the civilized world is speaking of the comparatively young Marbourg professor. They know his name for years as the brilliant investigator who discovered the diphtheria serum, but now they know him as the man who in all probability will revolutionize the treatment of consumption which has held the field for the past twenty years.

Von Behring's new theories bring him into direct conflict with the school in which he himself was reared. He is a scholar of Koch, an independent scholar, and he employs, like his master, exclusively experimental methods. But his doctrine sets him off from the other students of Koch. It is necessary here to sketch Koch's theories in order that the new doctrine may be better understood.

According to Koch the origin and cause of tuberculosis is the bacillus which how as the first to discover. The most prevalent of this illness in men is tuberculosis of the lungs or consumption. This disease is caused by the breathing in directly on the lungs of the tubercle bacillus. For this reason, therefore, the chief source of the disease is the expectorations or other "overthrow" as the Germans call it, of diseased persons. Tuberculosis in men and cattle is not identical. The bacillus of cattle tuberculosis does not infect men, and the reverse of bacillus followed by the tubercle bacillus of men is not dangerous for men. Koch maintains that the disease can be combated by combating the poisonous virus. His remedy, therefore, is isolation of the patient and the destruction of the "overthrow." No measures are necessary, therefore, against lactation containing fluids. In Berlin and in London Koch defeated the disease. In a word, he made consumption an infectious disease, and only the diseased person was to be considered.

Then views of Koch, here roughly sketched, were hotly contested in several quarters and the opposition to them grew in force and cogency, and when Behring came forward with the doctrine Koch's side rapidly sank. Behring came on one side every doctrine identical with Koch's name. He maintains that Koch is wrong, root and branch, and places himself before those other investigators who combated Koch's contagion theories, and goes even further than they did. Behring admits that the tubercle bacillus is the origin of the disease, but its entrance into the human organism need not be necessarily followed by the development of cases the bacillus is infectious and not in any sense dangerous. Every man, woman and child is in danger of receiving these bacilli, but the danger is remote that this bacillus in itself will produce disease can only follow when there is receptivity or disposition to nourish the bacillus. According to Behring, the source of the mischief lies in the milk used by babies. In his printed lecture he puts this statement in italics. The danger of infection, he maintains, lies in this milk, whether it is the milk of the mother or the milk of an animal. The bacillus is received into the ordinary food channels, and from there it makes its way into the tissues and the other organs, especially into the lungs.

With regard to the combating of the disease Behring is equally at complete variance with Koch. His method of fighting diphtheria illustrates his method with regard to consumption. Behring says that the diphtheria bacillus is so general, so widespread, that there is practically no escaping it, but disease can be averted where there is receptivity or disposition to nourish the bacillus. The attempt, therefore, to destroy the bacillus by isolation, disinfection or other similar means is hopeless and superfluous labor.

Behring will not join the army of bacillus hunters. His method consists rather in the immunizing of the threatened person and in the treatment of the patient with the assistance of his serum. And so with tuberculosis. The destruction of the bacillus is lost labor, and the isolation methods used for patients in thickly populated districts or towns are useless. He even goes so far as to say that the consumption homes will disappear as soon as better methods have been adopted. He has succeeded, just as von Behring succeeded with smallpox vaccination, in making cattle immune against experimental and accidental infection from tuberculosis. The adoption of these methods in the case of babies, is perhaps not possible, owing to the possible danger, but he believes that the time is approaching when we will be able to nourish babies by milk from immunized cattle, so that they will be free from tubercle bacilli which will be as effective as direct inoculation. This is a startling doctrine and it is quite impossible to reconcile it with Koch's theories. He combats the entire theory of contagion and lays special emphasis on predisposition, or on outside influences, like unsanitary dwellings, poor diet, insufficient nutrition, undue labor, etc. He will not remove the bacillus, he will remove that which makes the bacillus active.

Koch is probably the greatest observer that ever lived, the most patient, methodical, honest observer; but when he comes to sum up his observations he is a doctrinaire and in line with a theory. Diphtheria is transmitted by a direct contact, with a profound contempt for rounded theories as such, and will be quite contented to knock over his present views as soon as he sees they are untenable. He is a man of gigantic intellect and his outlook is world-wide and far beyond the narrow limits of his laboratory.

Prof. von Behring's theories are in accord with those of a school of investigators in America, among whom is Dr. Louis H. Warner, of New York City, formerly of Berlin. It is the impression of the English and European medical world that America is well in the van in the development of the Koch hypothesis to the contrary, a school of investigators still sways 7,000 of 10,000 large nations belonging to the twelve leading nations of the world.

CLASSIFIED WANTS



FEMALE HELP WANTED.

WANTED—An experienced girl for general housework, in family of two, 1315 N. Topoka. 12-11

WANTED—Girl for general housework, family of three, Mrs. E. E. Hamilton, 719 N. Lawrence. 12-11

WANTED—A good girl for general housework, Mrs. Fred Doud, 118 N. Market. 12-11

WANTED—A middle-aged woman for light housework and company, 409 East Douglas, room 1. 12-11

WANTED—To teach young lady with some talent in art, with free services while learning. Wichita Engraving Co., 263 N. Main. 12-11

WANTED—A good girl for general housework, good wages to right party. Mrs. Fred Bissant, 55 E. Douglas. 12-11

WANTED—An experienced girl to do general housework, no washing or ironing. Mrs. B. Levi, 34 N. Lawrence. 12-11

WANTED—A girl for general housework, 3 in family; no washing. Apply 12-11

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